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17 August 1963

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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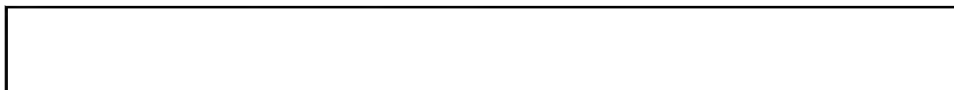
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DAILY BRIEF

South Vietnam: Buddhist demonstrators appear to be gaining the sympathy of increasing numbers of the general urban public as Buddhist suicides continue.

Stringent security measures are in effect in two coastal cities--Hué, where an elderly priest killed himself on 16 August with the sanction of the Buddhist hierarchy, and Nha Trang, near the site of a suicide by a Buddhist nun the day before. Clashes have occurred between army troops and demonstrators in both places.

President Diem is giving publicity to his reaffirmation of a policy of conciliation. His statement stresses that his interministerial committee for Buddhist affairs has full power to deal with the situation. It will begin to investigate Buddhist complaints this week.

For the past few days, however, rumors have circulated that further trouble is likely, possibly including a coup attempt. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] six battalions surrounding the capital in case of trouble from the Buddhists, [REDACTED] troops are becoming restless as a result of their prolonged alert status\

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*Congo (Brazzaville): The demonstrations in Brazzaville have subsided following the installation by Congolese Army leaders of a civilian provisional government.

Alphonse Massamba-Debat, a rival of Youlou who was dropped from the government last May, heads the new regime, which is to prepare for early elections. He appears to be essentially moderate, but also more of a genuine African nationalist than most older members of the Congolese political elite. He has a large personal following.

The other members of the provisional cabinet appear to have been chosen for their technical abilities rather than their political connections. They are for the most part younger men who have not been prominent heretofore.

Although none of the leftist labor leaders who organized the strike which culminated in the demonstrations against Youlou was given a cabinet post, they presumably are continuing to play an influential role behind the scenes. They were consulted by the military chiefs prior to the announcement of the provisional government. The chiefs themselves, at this stage at least, do not appear anxious to take on a broad political role.

One of the first statements issued by the new regime reaffirmed the country's friendship with France and its continued membership in the Paris-oriented African and Malagasy Union of moderate French-speaking states. However, the leftist laborites, some of whom have received training in the bloc, can be expected to press for a reduced dependence on France. Massamba-Debat himself has in the past criticized France for seeking to retain its entrenched economic position in the Congo.

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Cuba-Haiti: Cuban exile Rolando Masferrer is continuing his efforts to provide armed support for Haitian General Cantave's fight against the Duvalier regime, seeking a base in Haiti for operations against Cuba.

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[redacted] Masferrer is looking for financial support from the Cuban exile community in Florida to enable him to transport a number of followers into Haiti. [redacted] he and Cantave have a "mutual assistance pact," under which he will be granted a base in Haiti if Cantave gains power.

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[redacted] Masferrer's argument is that if Duvalier falls, the government of the Dominican Republic "can be destroyed without much difficulty." Then, with both countries controlled by elements friendly to him, former Cuban dictator Batista and "the Cuban millionaires" will help him, he will be in a position to "deal with the United States," and Castro can be toppled.

[redacted] It will be difficult for Masferrer to deliver any support to Cantave, and recently he has been involved more in planning than in action. Unlike many other Cuban exile leaders, however, he is a man of considerable daring and experience in Caribbean revolutionary activities.

[redacted] While his well-earned reputation for ruthlessness and gangsterism has led reputable Cuban exiles to shun him, a series of initial successes as an anti-Castro fighter might partially overcome this handicap.

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